

Tab 20

Proprietary School Certification Program Biannual Report

Coordinating Board for Higher Education
December 6, 2023

BACKGROUND

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) is authorized to issue certificates of approval to operate to proprietary schools, defined as “any person not specifically exempted...which offers or maintains on either a for-profit or not-for-profit basis within the state of Missouri a course or courses of instruction or study...which grants certificates or earned or honorary degrees.” Section 173.614.3, RSMo, requires a twice yearly report to CBHE on the current status of the program. This item provides an overview of the program, including the number of institutions in the sector, and the enrollment and outcomes of the students they serve. Initial standards for the establishment of the Proprietary School Certification Program were enacted in 1983. The central focus of the program has been consumer protection, which is accomplished through the implementation of standards related to school governance, administrative personnel, faculty qualifications, financial resources, program disclosures, and additional policies required to be provided to students upon request. Schools certified by the CBHE agree to comply with these standards and to provide data for staff review and analysis.

Program staff are responsible for oversight of school operations to verify students are treated in a fair and equitable manner, and receive education and training consistent with the published school policies. Staff determine compliance through on-site and desktop reviews, allowing staff to provide technical assistance on regulatory issues. Additional oversight is maintained through the annual renewal process where institutions report on enrollments and completions, graduate employment, and the financial assistance awarded to students.

CURRENT STATUS

Schools

Program staff review three types of applications: Certification to operate in Missouri, certification to recruit in Missouri, and exemption from certification standards. Applications are review on a year-round basis, which may lead to inconsistencies in the numbers of certifications or exemptions reported depending on the date.

The number of proprietary schools certified or exempted in Missouri include:

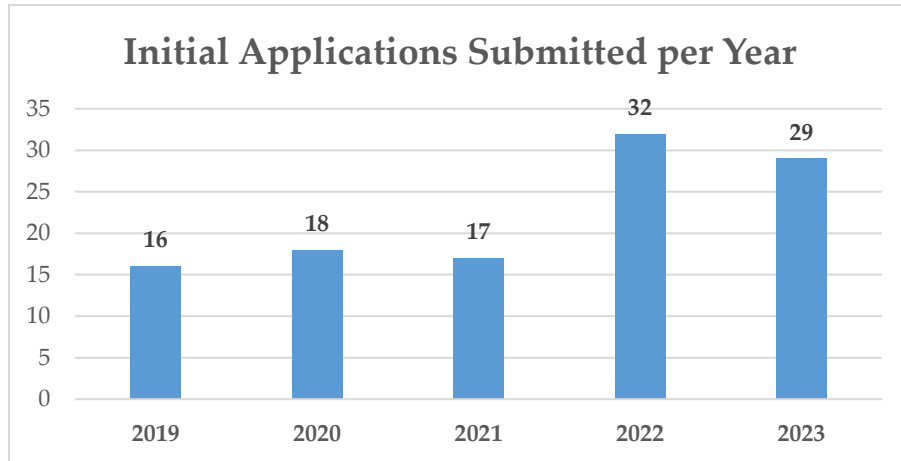
- 150 main institutions
- 12 branch institutions
- 14 recruit main institutions
- 1 recruit branch institution
- More than 400 CBHE-exempted institutions¹

Initial Applications

Initial applications from schools seeking certification to operate have doubled since 2019, and staff anticipate total applications for calendar year 2023 will surpass the number received in 2022. The cause of this increase may be related to schools seeking eligibility for the Fast Track

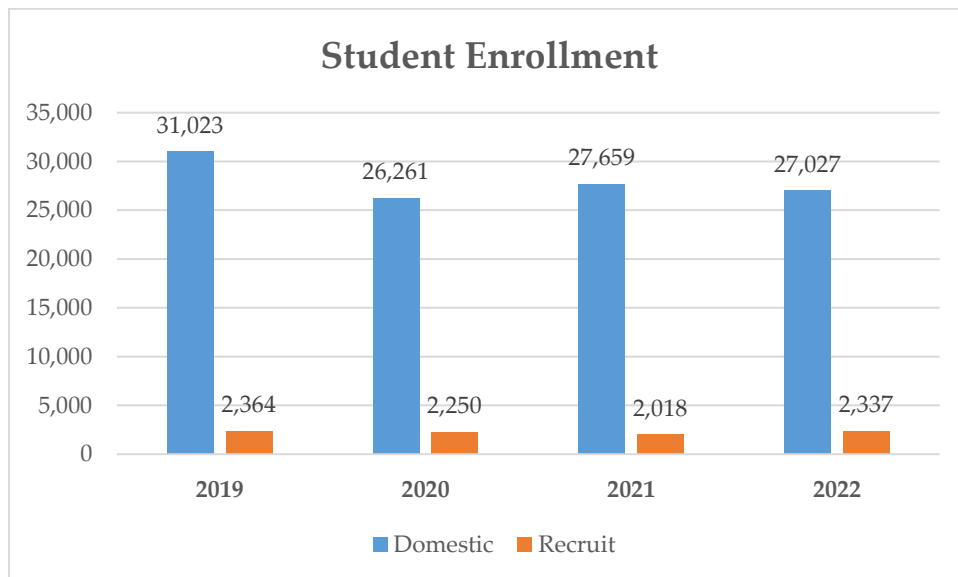
¹ Staff continue the process of reviewing old exemptions to determine if those institutions remain in operation within their selected exemption category.

Workforce Incentive Grant, the new Federal Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) requirements, and inclusion on Missouri's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).



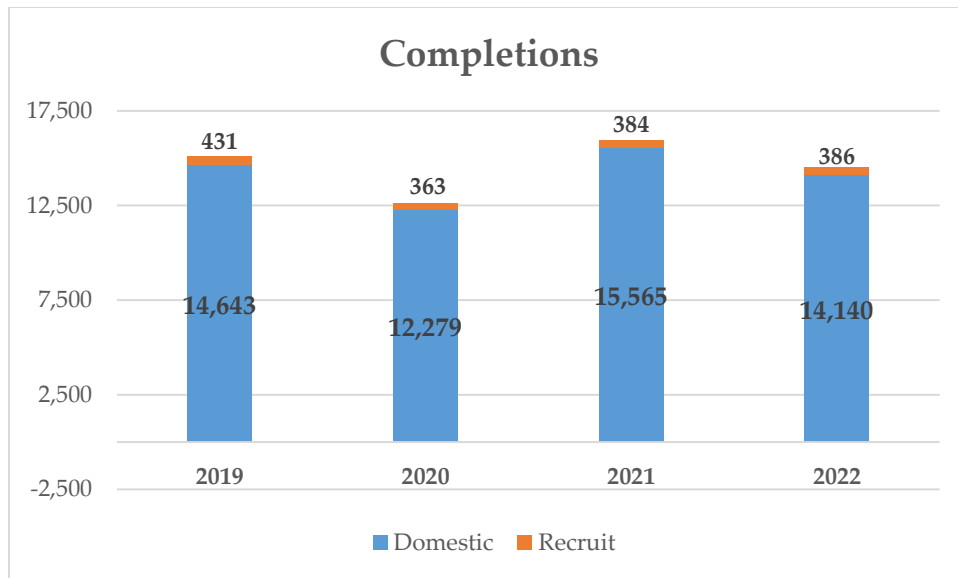
Enrollments

Enrollments decreased sharply between calendar years 2019 and 2020 but have slightly increased over the last three years. The department anticipates overall enrollment will continue to increase as new schools are approved and these students have additional access to financial assistance.



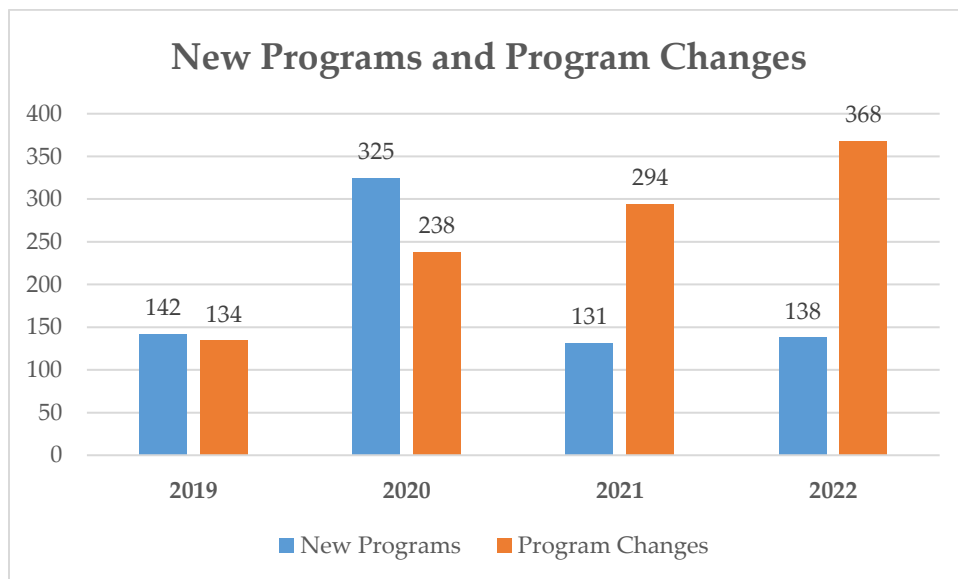
Completions

Completions data show some fluctuations that may be attributed to the pandemic but have remained generally steady over the last four years.



New Program and Program Changes

Certified schools continue to revise and offer new programs each year. In 2022, Proprietary School Certification staff worked with institutions on more than 500 programs and program changes. Early data for calendar year 2023 indicate fewer new programs but a continuing upward trend in the number of program changes as schools adjust to market demand.



NEXT STEPS

Proprietary School Certification program staff are actively engaged with institutions to ensure school officials have the appropriate tools to understand and abide by certification standards. Staff are also working on additional training materials, process improvements, and rule revisions to better accomplish the mission to provide adequate protections to Missouri students.

RECOMMENDATION

Per Section 173.614.3, RSMo, this is an information item only.

NO ATTACHMENTS